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THE NEW AGE

FOR A PEOPLE'S OFFENSIVE

At Tripuri the annual session of the National Congress shall have to draw the balance sheet of a year of the most rapid and far reaching developments. These developments both in the world and at home have brought about a situation in which a planned offensive of the people against imperialism becomes an urgent necessity.

About a year back on the eve of Haripura, it was British Imperialism which was on the offensive. The aggression of the Fascist powers was no doubt growing. The growing threat of the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis was being sought to be turned against the popular forces of democracy in Spain and in France. Chamberlain was hoping to turn the aggression in Spain and China to his advantage. The Cliveden set behind the British Premier, was scheming to yoke the fascist axis in a drive against the Soviet Union against the democracies in Europe against the rising tide of National Revolutionary Movements in the near and the Far East. It was a dangerous game, which required capitulations on the continent of Europe which brought in its trail a threat to the British supremacy in the mediterranean. The imperial interests of the British ruling class demanded this course. In the growing clash between the forces of Socialism and democracy on the one hand and of fascism and reaction on the other, the clique of British finance capital had no alternative but to chose the latter, abetment of the fascist aggression in Europe and Asia, the forced pace of rearmament at home, and an aggressive policy against its colonial possessions, in Palestine, Egypt and in India, were the main featres of its policy then.

Imperialist offensive stayed at Haripura

The provocative offensive against the Arabs in Palestine, the bolstering of an anti-national ruling clique in Egypt and an aggressive policy against the Congress ministries and the preparations to impose the Federation on India, were the main features of that policy of colonial aggression a year ago. The aim was to consolidate an army base in the Near East to protect the British oil resources there, to preserve the naval supremacy in the eastern half of the mediterranean and defend the British route to India and the East, against Italian aggression. Above all, the monopolist domination over the Indian Empire had to be preserved at all costs. The early imposition of the Federal Scheme, by allying all the reactionary anti-national interests in the country, by splitting the growing anti-imperialist unity inside the National Congress and by isolating and suppressing the growing revolt of the states, was the main objective of this offensive in India. On the eve of Haripura this

offensive took the form of an attack on the Congress ministries in U.P. and in Behar. Imperialism hoped for a capitualition—for a split. But the forces of popular will, were irresistible. The unity of the nation and the Congress was preserved, the *status quo* defended. The kisans and workers in their millions were on the move fighting for the demands of the Election Manifesto—fighting against the anti-national Zamindars and capitalists. The states people in Mysore had begun their pioneer heroic struggle which was to open a new chapter of our struggle for freedom. The imperialist offensive was defeated.

Munich Shifts the Balance of Power

During the last twelve months, the situations radically transformed. Impelled by class-interest, Chamberlain went from one capitulation to another. The fascist axis has gained one strategic position after another. Munich has shifted the balance of power in Europe in favour of the reactionary fascist axis. Japan has taken advantage of the situation to deliver a further blow to British interest in the East. The forces of peace and democracy have received another set back. Chamberlain is preparing for another capitualation at Rome. The critical situation is creating a cleavage and vacillation in the ranks of the Britis ruling class. The popular forces in England, and France especially the working class, is showing signs of regaining the initiative it had lost in the last crisis. But the hope lies in the heroic peoples of Spain and China who form the vanguard of the anti-fascist struggle, of the fight for peace and democracy. The hope lies with the people of India who can now take the offensive against weakened imperialism.

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The hope lies with Soviet Union which has now overcome its internal enemy and stands like an unshakeable rock stemming the tide of fascist aggression from the east and the west.

The capture of new strategic positions by fascist powers has not liquidated the internal economic crisis in these countries. On the other hand the critical conditions in Italy, Germany and Japan drive them to further acts of aggression. This is having repurcussions in England, France and America in sharpening the political crisis in these countries. The conditions are favourable for a unification of the forces of peace and democracy—for an offensive against the pro-fascist regimes in France and England which are holding up the fight against reaction. In England the fight against Chamberlain grows stronger. The British ruling class caught in the repercussions of its pro-fascist policy is vacillating. It no more talks in the confident tones of imposing the Federal Scheme upon India. The time tables of introducing the Federal Legislatures etc., are no more heard of The Viceroy in his recent speech on the Federation talked in apologetic tones :—"It has been my object to re-affirm to you my own *faith in the Federal ideal* and the importance that in my judgement attaches to its early realisation".

Imperialism in a fix.

In view of the complications which have arisen in the arena of international politics, the initiative has clearly passed out of the hands of the British as far as the imposition of Federation is concerned.

To this critical situation the British rulers do not think in terms of an offensive in India. They see how the might

and the prowess of the people's movement in the British provinces and in the states has grown. They see the growing cofidence of the kisan who is organising in his independent Sanghas who is moving into action in defence of his crop and his land. They see the growing power of the working class, the rising wave of strikes in the backward strata of workers, the rising political consciousness in the cities which makes gigantic protest strikes like the November 7th, possible. They see the on rushing tide of the states people's struggle which is drawing in one third of India which was so long dormant, into political struggle. They know it would be madness in this situation to try to impose the Federation which would only serve to unify all these forces in one common battle front led by the National Congress.

New slogan for a New situation

That the 'prospect' of Federation at an early date has vanished into thin air is undoubtedly a victory for the Indian people, a victory for the Congress. But that is not enough. *The time has now come to pass on from the purely defensive position to the offensive.* It is not enough to say "The Federation is dead, long live the Constituent Assembly". It is necessary to work out a concrete *Plan of Action* for an offensive—for an assault on the present reactionary *Central Government*—on the present Constituation *as a whole.* Last year the slogan was to oppose the Federation, by all means at the disposal of the nation—to carry on a campaign of agitation against it as a preparation for a struggle against its imposition. *That slogan no longer holds good to-day.* A new slogan—a new plan of action is demanded by the new situation. This new slogan and plan of action is put forward by the Congress president.

The President's Plan of action.

In his message to the Tamil Nad Political Conference in December, the President stated:—"Supposing the British Government decided to prepare for the inaugeration of the federation for five or ten years what shall we do? Shall we sit down with folded arms and play a purely defensive role? We cannot afford to do so. We want Purna Swarajya as early as possible and in order to get it, it is we who have to take the initiative". The plan which the Congress shall submit will be an ultimatum to the British Government rejecting the Federal plan and demanding complete Independence. It would be made clear that if the demand is not fulfilled within a specified period, mass Civil Disobedience Movement would be launched. This is the main point of Sjt. Subhash Babu's plan of action. The other points are as follows: (1) immediate efforts to be made to form Coalition Ministries in the remaining provinces on the clear cut understanding, of fighting the Federation and of granting the full demands of the minorites. The idea is to challenge the Central Government from the strategic position of the ministries.

The second point is that the Ministries would not resign immediately after the ultimatum is delivered but would go on stiffening their attitude and creating deadlocks. The third point is that preparations shall be made so that the Congress organisation would be prepared for the repression which would be let loose against it.

This is the general outline of the plan of action of the Congrsss President as

can be gathered from his statements, speeches and interviews which have appeared in the press. It appears that it was laid down in an elaborate memorandum which was discussed with Gandhiji after the concluston of the last Working Committee meeting at Wardha. So far, no member of the Working Committee nor Gandhiji himself has commented upon it. Even Pandit Jawahar Lal is silent about it. In the meanwhile the Congress president has called upon the Tamil Nad Political Conference "to ponder over the problem and make a definite recommendation to the Tripura Congress." We would have liked if the original memorandum itself were made available to the entire rank and file of the Congress so that it could have been the basis of discussion in all the provincial and district conferences which would be taking place all over the country on the eve of Tripuri. For the first time, an issue which was coming up before the annual session would have been widely discussed by the rank and file and its opinion recomended for the guidance of the session itself.

Two Lines

We are afraid the plan as a whole does not find favour with the majority of the present Working Committee. The plan would in all probability be rejected by the Working Committee and the reason behind the rejection would be that the plan implies a policy which would be a sharp break with the present policy of drift and conciliation. Sjt. Subhas Bose says that the acceptance of office by the Congress has also been responsible for a drift toward constitutionalism (Free Press Journal 30-12-38). In fact Gandhiji has viewed "the experiment in office acceptance" as he calls it, as a serious effort, on the one hand to avoid a bloody revolution and on the other mass civil desobedience movemont hitherto un attempted." It is a line which pins its faith in the gradual transfer of power through constitutional opposition and without mass struggle. According to this line, the Ministers are not the spear head, driven by the force of people's struggle against the power of the bureaucracy and the vested interests. On the other hand the Ministries are supposed to be the gardians of the people attempting to secure their demands by conciliation with the oppressors and with those who punish the people if they become turbulent. For the purpose of maintaining this line Gandhiji had even to modify his principle of non-violence into one of *minimum violence* !

This line of constitutionalism, the result of which we are witnessing for the last two years, allows no sharp break with imperialism. It is a line of verbal rejection of the Federation while we go on working the ministries till the federation is actually imposed upon us. This line cannot but lead to a compromise on the issue of the Federation in the sense of Sathyamurthy's proposal. The line which the Congress President proposes implies a *total reversal* of the present attitude in every field. Taking account of the international situation the President proposed to strike now when imperialism is weak, when it is yet preparing for a conflict. The situation in India, the rising militant mood of the masses, their growing political consciousness and organisation all these factors are favourable. But the acceptance of the strategy of attack would involve a complete break with the line of drift and concilia-

tion which is threatening the forces of National struggle with disruption.

Coalition Ministry as a part of the Plan

When the Congress President proposes a line of fight, he does not want the Ministries forthwith to resign and go in for a campaign of jail-filling Civil-Disobedience movement. He wants the Ministries to continue functioning, not as at present, but acting from their strategic positions boldly implementing the peoples demands and widening Civil Liberties. He wants Congress-coalition Ministries in the remaining provinces. But Coalition Ministries have always been considered as a reactionary combination. How can they find a place in a plan of fighting action? The Coalition Ministries which would fit in with Sjt. Bose's plan would not be opportunist parliamentary alliances without a radical programme. A Coalition Ministry which would take their stand on the Congress Manifesto and bind themselves to *carry out a radical agrarian programme*, which would pledge itself to a plan of fight against the reactionary centres is an objective to be worked for. Such ministry is a possibility in Bengal. It would be such a tremendous advance over the present one that it could transform the political situation in Bengal. Such Ministries have not been so far possible mainly because the right wing leadership has failed boldly to champion the demands of the peasantry. Informed observers in Bengal maintain that a Coalition Ministry based mainly on Congress—Krishak Praja Combination is possible. If this comes about on the platform of a radical agrarian reform and the struggle against the reactionary Centre, it could open new avenues for securing lasting Hindu-Muslim Unity. This could be immediately followed by an offer to the Muslim League to form Congress—League Coalition Ministries in *all* provinces but strictly on the basis of carrying out the full programme of the Congress and the launching of a united struggle against imperialism. Such a proposal itself could be the basis of isolating the rabid reactionaries and establishing real fraternal relations between the masses of the two communities. But this implies the development of joint struggle for common agrarian demands the readiness to grant all the communal demands of the Muslim minorities and the purging of the Congress of any Hindu bias.

Ultimatum and Struggle

The last and the most important part of the President's plan of action is the preparation to launch a Civil Disobedience struggle in the event of British Imperialism rejecting the nations' ultimatum. The President is aware that the launching of such a struggle would imply severe repression and it is astated that his plan provides for its effective resistance. Here we must point out that the forthcoming struggle if it is to be successful, must utilise the new forces and technique of Workers and peasant organisation and struggle which has been developed in the mean while. There can now be no All-India—Mass Struggle in which the workers in transport and industries do not participate by bringing about a complete general strike. There can be no struggle in which there is no simultaneous rent and tax strike of the peasants throughout the country. The development of political consciousness and organisation of workers and peasants throughout India including the states, has reached a

stage, when such a nation-wide co-ordination of struggle is possible. The best guarantee against repression is a rapid development of a mass offensive of this character.

The struggle which we now plan must be on a scale hitherto unattempted. It must bring together the entire fighting resources of the nation. The grander and bolder the struggle, the shorter would be its duration. But the planning out of such a fight implies a new orientation of the Congress towards labour and peasant organisations. It implies that these organisations. Are strengthened, laws which restrict their growth are repealed that united front relations be established between them and the Congress, that Congressmen and Committees participate in the conscious organisation of workers and peasants. It implies that we raise an All-India volunteer corps under the aegis of the Congress—the nucleus of the Peoples Army. It implies that we set about creating an alternative machinery which would continue to guide the movement and struggle, inspite of repression. These are the essential requirements of the plan of action which the president's proposal implies.

If the plan is marked out in its details and its logical implications it would mean a complete break with the present line of conciliation with the anti-national vested interests. The plan would involve a complete re-orientation of the policy which the Ministries are at present following. It would not be consistent with such things as the Zamindar—Congress agreement in Behar, with the Bombay Trades Disputes Bill, the new Behar Public Safety Bill and so on. The plan pre-supposes that the Ministries and the Congress organisations put an end to the policy of alienating the masses of workers and peasants and their organisations, of using repressive measures against strikes in cities and the country-side. The plan is *one of struggle and as such one of unity.* The unity required is above all unity with the most advanced and fighting sections of the masses—viz., the Kisans and the Mazfurs. Congress-Labour Unity, Congress-Kisans Unity must be the foundation of such a plan of struggle. Persecution and victimisation of Labour and Kisan workers, of Communists and Socialists in Congress organisations by the frequent use of disciplinary actions, must go.

A plan of this type cannot be put through unless we set about the task of rebuilding the National Congress, revitalising it from the bottom upwards. We want real mass membership with a minimum of political consciousness which would enable it to participate in periodical conferences and elections intelligently. We would want democratical functioning committees which consist of men working in all the the section of the masses especially the toiling masses. A war against bogus and unreal membership will have to be carried out. There should be minimum qualification for office bearers, but these must be of a political character. The spinniug of 5000 yards of yarn is not a political task. The qualification for an office bearer could be so may hours voluntary work per week in any of the activities under the Congress organisation propaganda, education of volunteer and welfare work etc. Regular work in a Trade Union or a Kisan organisation should also be considered a sufficient qualification.

To Conclude, the Plan of Sjt Subhas Bose means a complete re-orientation of the Congress policy and organisation. It involes the following points:—

1. An immediate people's offensive against the reactionary Central authority for the overthrow of the Constitution for the transfer of power to the people. 2. co-ordination of the States' Peoples' struggle with that of the people in the British Provinces, 3. the formation of Coalition Ministries on the basis of a radical agrarian programme and of the struggle against the Central authority and the Constitution; achieving of Communal Unity, 4. re-orientation of the Ministerial policy, no compromise with the vested interests to water down the Election programme, bold widening of Civil Liberties, no more use of repressive machinery against people's movements, 5. democratisation and revitalising of the Congress organisation, 6. freedom for building workers and peasants organisations and the building up of Congress-Labour-Kisan united front.

We maintain that Sjt. Bose's plan is a composite whole. It is *an alternative line*—the line of struggle, of no-compromise of building the United National Front It is the line for which the left—the communists and socialists have always stood. The point is now to carry it through the next session of the Congress and to carry it out successfully This requires the unity of the Left, a Left Block. This plan should be widely discussed throughout the country. It would undoubtedly receive the backing of the entire left. We must carry it through at Tripuri.

PROTECTION TO PRINCES

A. K. Ghosh

"There may be in certain states misgovernment of a scandalaous and intolerable kind which justifies and demands interference from outside. . . . Even if these conditions arise we cannot allow such interference to be orgaeised by irresponsible people in British India. . . ."

(*Sir Harry Haig in his preamble to the Indian States Protection Act of 1934*)

Section 2 of the Act runs:

Whoever within or without British India conspires to overawe by means of criminal force or the show of criminal force the Administration of any state in India, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to seven years to which fine may be added.

Under section 3 of the Act the scope of the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act as amended by the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1932 was extended to cover the States and attempt "to bring into hatred or contempt or to excit disaffection towards the Administration in any state in India" was made a penal offence.

The Act, as admitted by its framers, was calculated to prevent "interference from irresponsible people in British India" *even in those cases where the Princes were guilty of gross misrule and oppression.* Based on the denial of the unity of the Indian people the Act threatened to impose heavy punishment on those in British India who either through the platform or through the Press dared to denounce Princely autocracy.

An all-embracing Act

But this was not all. There were other sections of the States Protection Act that could be extended to any district in British India by a notification of the Local Government. Under these Sections the Magistrates in the areas where the Act was extended were armed with extraordinary powers. Any assembly of five persons could be declared unlawful if the Magistrate was satisfied that the object of the Assembly was that of proceeding from British India into a state in India and that the entry of such persons into the said (states) territory or their presence therein, is likely or will tend to cause obstruction to the Administration of the said state or danger to human life or safety or a disturbance of the public tranquility or a riot or an affray within the said territory. . . ." Further the Magistrate had the power to "direct any person *to abstain from a certain act* if the Magistrate considers that such direction is likely to prevent obstruction to the Administration of a state in India or danger to human life or disturbance to public tranquility. . . ."

Human ingenuity could not devise a more comprehensive and all-embracing measure. All this to protect from public condemnation, the Princely despots who fatten on the life-blood of their people, whose sole virtue is betrayal of the national cause in the service of the foreign rulers.

The Central Assembly which was packed with traitors who had helped the British Government to forge repressive laws to crush the Civil Disobedience movement, passed the Bill.

Imperialism thought that it had scored a great victory. The Act would successfully scotch all attempts to build the unity of the Indian people, to break down the barrier that divided the people of the Indian states from their brothers in British India, would prevent any action, any demonstration in British India to protest against princely autocracy and in solidarity with the States people; would gag the nationalist Press effectively.

But Imperialism had miscalculated.

In the eight Congress Provinces the Princes Protection Act has become a dead letter. Solidarity demonstrations are organised every where Till the Congress High Command banned it, Volunteers from Provinces poured into Rajkot, Travancore, Dhenkanal and other States. The nationalist Press has carried on a vigorous campaign of exposure against the barbaric repression of the States people's movement.

It is well-known that the Orissa Government whed pressed by the Government refused to apply the Act in its Province. If the Governor had not given way, a first-rate crisis would have followed. This is the stand that every Congress Ministry is expected to take.

The Extradition Act

But the States Protection Act is not the only weapon with which Imperialism

(*Concluded on Page 319*)

THE MUNICH BETRAYAL

By G. Friedrich

There are few cases in history which even approach the ruthless betrayal of the vital interests of the Czech people put through at Munich. A peace-loving, industrious people, fighting for its freedom, a people with a history reaching back almost a thousand years, has been treated simply as small change in the fascists' transaction. Czechoslovakia has been sacrificed to the lust for power of German fascism, whose barbarity and lack of culture has scarcely its like in the whole world. And now, at a time when ignoramuses and demagogues of all kinds, who call themselves "politicians", are instituting wild celebrations and rejoicing at the betrayal of the Czech people, when all the traitors are presenting the shameful defeat of the French Government as a magnificent diplomatic victory for Daladier, when Chamberlain is covering his face with the hypocritical mask of an angel of peace—at this time it is our duty to disperse this smoke screen which obscures the truth.

The workers and the people in all sections of the population have the right to know what has really happened. This burning question is on the lips of the peasants who have been driven off their land, and not even allowed to take their few household goods with them. This question appears in the faces of thousands of weeping women and children who, thanks to the "generosity" of the Munich decision, are permitted to flee before the fascist troops, leaving behind hem house and home. This question is being asked by the Czech soldiers, who abandon their fortifications with heavy hearts, since, they have not been allowed to fight; these fortifications have been erected by means of peristent and arduous work, with the money of the people, not for the purpose of attack but for the defence of the country. The same question—what has happened—is being asked, and with justification, by the brave fighters in Republican Spain, and the Chinese soldiers in their trenches, by the people of France and Britain, and by the whole of progressive mankind.

What has happened? A monstrous betrayal, not only of the Czechoslovakian people, but also of the cause of world peace and democracy. A conspiracy, not only against the unity and independence of czechoslokavia, but also against the French and British people.

The decisions reached by Hitler and Mussolini in Munich, with the active help and support of Chamberlain and Daladier, are a conspiracy against the Spanish people, a conspiracy against European democracy and world peace. The imperialist world war which Chamberlain is supposed to have prevented, has only been brought nearer and its outbreak hastened. This war will break out sooner or later. And now the French and British Governments have done everything in their power, to ensure that the fascist aggressor power shall be in a more favourable position to face it. Without

going to war, they have dictated conditions to the whole of Europe such as the world has never yet experienced; whole nations have been defeated by Hitler and Mussolini, without this victory costing them a single shot.

Not only the Czech people, but also the French people have suffered a defeat. For a peace based on continuous capitulations to the fascist aggressors is a defeat. The enemies of and traitors victory for the cause of peace. In actual fact, however, it is a new Sedan, a new day of shame for France.

We hear to-day, from all sides, Chamberlain, the "angel of peace,"' has saved peace against Hitler's wicked wiles. In reality, however, Hitler and Chamberlain are not opponents but actual partners in a common cause. They are the main instigators of the joint conspiracy against peace, against the working-class movement. The betrayal of Czechoslovakia was arranged and worked out in all its details between Chamerlain and Hitler. Even in Berchtesgaden, and then at Godesberg, the manoeuvre was agreed upon and the roles assigned. Chamberlain never had any intention of standing up to Hitler. Hitler's blustering demands, his threats, and his ultimatum, were all agreed upon, so that Chamberlain could pose as the "saviour of peace". Mobilisation was carried out in France and England only in order to frighten and mislead the people. The Air Raid Precaution measures, the arrangements against gas attacks, the black-outs, all this was only a camouflage behind which the perfidious betrayal was carried out. The Paris building workers called their strike off, in order to carry out important fortification works for the defence of the fatherland: workers, peasants, intellectuals, students, enthusiastically carried out the orders to stand by, in order, weapons in hand, to defend peace, against the fascist aggressors. Meanwhile, behind the backs of the people who were thus deluded, intrigues were being carried on and pacts signed.

Together with Hitler, Chamberlain is preparing war against the Soviet Union. He knows very well, however, that if he attempts anything of the kind he will bite off more than he can chew. But this diehard Tory is prepared to go to any lengths. In order to carry out his plan, he betrays European democracy. Chamberlain wants to fascise Europe. But this policy will in the end be turned against France. To-day France has already ceased to be a Great Power; the small states who based their position on France's policy of world power have lost their faith in this doubtful friend. And tomorrow Britain will suffer the same fate.

Meanwhile, however, the disgraceful game continues. *Now that Czechoslovakia is settled a blow is being prepared against Republican Spain.* In a few weeks, perhaps in a few days, Chamberlain, Mussolini and Daladier will meet again to "settle" the Spanish questiou.

Once more all the tricks of the trade will be used, in order to carry out the betrayal of Republican Spain. The Anglo-Italian agreement of April 16 last, is to be brought into force, without the stipulated conditions for the withdrawal of Italian troops from Spain having been fulfilled. Not only is the annexation of Abyssinia to be recognised, the interventionist are to be given a free hand in Spain. The Spanish people, which has held out against all attacks, for over two years, is now to be delivered into the

hands of its oppressors. That is the second part of the price to be paid for the graveyard of "peace", which Chamberlain is so energetically defending.

The treacherous leaders of French Socialism, *Blum* and *Faure*, know all this quite well. In spite of this, they conceal the truth from the masses of the people, and sing paeans of praise of Chamberlain. At a moment when the Czech people is about to be subjugated to fascism, and when a deal is to be pulled off with the fate of the Spanish people Leon Blum, the instigator of the notorious non-intervention pact, is addressing speeches of thanks to Daladier and Chamberlain; he rejoices that life has once more become normal again, and that he can once more sleep peacefully at night. Is it possible to imagine a more brazen mockery? At a time when tens of thousands of Blum's party comrades are obliged to flee from the Sudeten districts, where further thousands of Social democrats will probably find themselves to-morrow in Hitler's concentration camps, at such a time, Mr. Blum rejoices that he can once more sleep peacefully!

But the traitorous game will not end with Spain. The policy of the British Government goes still further. Chamberlain will next attempt, with the help of Hitler, to bring about a partition of China, in Japan's favour. The whole map of the world is to be carved up again by "peaceful" means, and the aggressors' appetites thus satisfied.

This, then, is the essential nature of Chamberlain's policy: to strengthen German fascism, and do everything to prevent its collapse. He needs fascism, for the campaign which he is planning against the Soviet Union. For this reason he is making it possible for Hitler to gain military and diplomatic successes, and is plunging France into the abyss. For this reason he smashed Austria and dismembered Czechoslovakia. For this reason he has dealt blows to France, from which that country will find it difficult to recover. This is the reason for his back-stairs offensive against the People's Front, which forms a firm barrier to fascist policy, which will inevitably lead Britain also to destruction.

This disgraceful policy is being supported by the reactionary leaders of the Second International, because they hope, together with the big bourgeoisie, to hold up the development of Socialism in the Soviet Union. The new history of the Bolshevik Party draws a correct parallel between the behaviour of the ruling class in England and the former attitude of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie of Russia. This history of the Bolshevik Party states: "The ruling classes in England are at the moment pursuing approximately the same policy which the liberal-bourgeois monarchy pursued under tsarism; they feared the "extreme measures" of tsarist policy, but they were still more afraid of the people. Thus, they turned more and more to a policy of conciliation of the tsar, and agreement with the tsar against the people. It is well known that the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie of Russia paid dearly for this divided policy. It is to be assumed that the ruling classes in England and their friends in France and the United States will also get historic justice meted out to them."

We should of course learn our lessons from history. And since the ruling classes in their blindness seem unable to learn their lessons they will be compelled to suffer the fate which is in store for them. All the people cannot be fooled all the time. The very fact that an attempt is being madé, at any rate indirectly, to accuse of being a party to the Munich agreement the only great Power which has consistently fought for peace, the only true fighter against the aggressors,–this shows how shaky are the foundations of the Munich agreement. This betrayal, in conjunction with the whole structure of lies, will inevitably collapse.

The disappointment of the people will change into a storm of real popular anger and will sweep away all those who, under the mask of "peace," are in fact leading the nations into war. The people will take up the struggle for world peace, for the independence and freedom of the nations, against the fascist aggressors. Thus they will save peace in the true sense of the word.

SOVIET ECONOMIC AND MILITARY STRENGTH

By J. MILLER.

[NOTE;—J. Miller was in Moscow from May 1936 to October 1937, on a European Travelling Scholarship from Sheffield University, which he used for the purpose of studying Soviet economic organisation. The State Planning Commission gave him facilities for this study. He lived with Soviet students in the Hostel of the Planning Accademy, attended some of the Academy lectures, and was for a year on the staff of the State Planning Commission's Institute for Economic Research. He was the only foreign student connected with the Academy or Institute and living at the Hostel, and was able to get a particularly good knowledge of the outlook of the Soviet "intelligentsia."]

Lord Londonderry has told us how worried Hitler is at the growing might of the U.S.S.R. Mr. Chamberlain, when at Munich he presented Eastern Europe and the Balkans to Hitler and laid the foundations of a European block against Russia, was no doubt inspired by similar anxieties. How strong is Russia, and how fast is that strength increasing? It is important for us, in advocating that collective security by which the U.S.S.R. may help to save our own skins from the dangers of Munich, to know and use these facts.

Military strength is based primarily on industry. The Soviet share of world output for some major commodities, in 1928 (the beginning of the Five Year Plans) and 1936 (the next comparable point in the capitalist cycle), was as follows:[1]

	1928 per cent.	1936 per cent.
Coal	2.9	11.2
Pig iron	3.8	19.0
Steel	4.0	15.4
Electricity	1.9	8.6
Copper	1.8	7.6
Aluminium	None	9.9
Superphosphate	1.0	9.7

Russia is now the leading industrial power after the United States. The following table[2] shows Soviet production compared to the U.S.A., Great Britain, and Germany (without Austria etc.) in 1936:

Commodity	Soviet output at percentage of		
	U.S.A.	Britain.	Germany
Electricity	23.4	124.9	77.2
Coal	28.8	54.0	79.7
Oil	19.8	138.0	...
Steel	33 8	...	85.6
Machinery	45.7	153.5	135.7
Sulphuric acid	27.9	113.8	76.2
Cotton goods	33.2	91.9	237.0 (in 1933)
Footwear	35.5	...	160.4
Sugar	170.0	392.3	125.9
Total industrial output	34.6	140.0	115.9

These figures show actual output, not productive capacity, which is fully utilised in the U.S.S.R. but not in other countries even at boom times.

In 1929 (the capitalist peak year) Soviet industrial production was 3.8 per cent of the rest of the world. By 1932 (the capitalist slump) it was 11 per cent. By 1936 it rose to 15.2 per cent. which shows that steady Soviet advance to be even faster than the boom phase of the capitalist cycle. The Third Five Year Plan (1938-42) has not yet been published, but it is expected to provide for an industrial output reaching by 1942, nearly three-quarters of the American peak, which would be nearly a third of the total capitalist world's output, or three times the British and six times the French in a boom year. This is a perfectly feasible objective and would make Soviet *per capita* production more than in France, four-fifths of Germany, three-quarters Britain and half the United States.

The rate of capital development and improvement of labour efficiency in the U.S.S.R., and its long term plans for exploiting its vast natural resources, are such as to make it not an unreasonable prediction that *within the next generation the Soviet Union will be as powerful, industrially, as the rest of the world put together*. This is on the assumption that future capitalist production peaks are neither higher nor lower than the 1937 one, which itself barely exceeded the previous (1929) peak, despite rearmament.

In Soviet agriculture, the difficulties of the collectivisation period are now over and its fruits apparent.

The average annual rate of growth in agricultural production before collectivisation (1926–29) was less than 1 per cent. Since collectivisation (1933-37) it has

averaged 12 per cent. a year (in part due to livestock recovery after serious losses, but an extraordinary figure nevertheless). Agricultural output last year was three-and-a-half times Germany and nine-tenths of the U.S.A. Next year Russia is expected to exceed the United States and thus become the leading agricultural country (in output) in the world. Last year the grain harvest was 42 per cent. more than in 1913 (which was fairly good year by pre-war standards), cotton three-and-a-half times as much, sugar-beet twice and flax two-thirds more.

The following table of total national output shows the U.S.S.R. to be stronger economically, than Germany, Italy and Japan combined:

	Year	Production (in milliard Marks)
U.S.S.R.	1937	115.0
Germany	1928	68.5
Britain	1928	64.2
France	1928	38.2
Japan	1995	23.0
Italy	1927	18.8

(Since 1925, however, Japanese industry has considerably increased.)

The successful efforts made to achieve economic independence are shown by these figures of imports as percentage of total requirements.[3]

	1913 per cent.	1928 per cent.	1935 per cent.
Iudustrial and transport machinery	21	21	1
Agricultural machinery	41	16	...
Tractors	100	66	...
Motor vehicles	100	69	·3
Aluminium	100	100	2
Rubber	100	100	60
Cotton	47	41	7
Paper	39	24	...

Since 1935, Russia has attained complete independence for cotton and, it is claimed, for rubber too, but most of her tin requirements are still imported. Apart from this, the complete cessation of foreign trade would deprive Russia only of such things as coffee, cocoa, the latest foreign technical inventions and tourists. Nor would the loss of her export trade cause any greater inconvenience. So blockade does not matter, and there are no vulnerable ocean routes to protect in time of war. The Soviet's life-lines are the internal railways, which are now working well enough to have overfulfilled their Second Five Year Plan by 7.7 per cent. in four years. (Each mile of track carries three-and-a-half times as much freight as in the United States, five times as much as in England, and eight times as mnch as in Italy).

Everybody knows that the fighting forces erected on this economic basis are the largest in the world. Their quality may so far be gauged only from the recent Far Eastern incident which, according to detailed reports, was as great a military as a diplomatic triumph. The quality of the air force may be gauged from the Polar flights and elsewhere. It is also generally known that the Soviets are rapidly building a "world navy" able to operate from the Arctic. Expenditure on the armed forces has risen in line with Germany. In 1937 it was more than had been planned for the whole of the 1933-37 five-year period. This year's estimate is over half as much again. This has caused the rise in the standard of living to be less than the increase of "between two and three times" projected by the Communist Party for the Second Five Year Plan

from the low level of 1932. Nevertheless, it has risen during the last few years probably faster than for the mass of the people in any country before. The Soviet economic system is strong enough to produce both guns and butter in ever increasing quantities. When the coming war is either over or averted for good, neither the present defence burden nor high rate of capital development will be neceesary, and the standard of material welfare will increase at an astonishing pace. At present more than 600 of the 700 motor vehicles made each day are heavy lorries, and of the huge sum allocated this year for construction, only a tenth is for housing.

Soviet strength depends, ultimately, on the outlook and confidence of its citizens. The material gains of the Revolution, the rapidly rising standard of life, social security and confidence in the future, cemented by an assiduous and continuous propaganda (or, more accurately, education), have made the workers and peasants solid for the regime. Voting in the recent elections, unpleasantly similar to Fascist 99 per cents. in its superficial appearance, contains a profound and genuine difference. The voting for socialism, identified with Stalin, the Party and the election candidates in the minds of the people, and the votes did measure the prevailing confidence in the social system and its leadership. The Moscow trials and the extensive purge of 1937 reflect something that might have been the Achilles' Heel of Soviet Russia. The mental atmosphere there is one which makes it all too easy for sincerely dissident intellectuals to develop a bitter sense of grievance. These formed the conspiracies and were the sufferers in the purge. The workers and peasants, beyond devoutly hoping that the G. P. U. missed none of the Trotskyist traitors, were unaffected. Indeed, their confidence in the regime was increased when they say on which side of the barricades the deviationists had landed. But the conspiracies did get very near a pitch which would have meant untold dislocation before its inevitable defeat. The elimination of all suspected and even "possible" conspirators from responsible jobs was not carried through without a good deal of dislocation. I can only surmise its extent in the armed forces, but know something of its course and effects in economic administration. If we can deduce what has happened in the armed forces from industry, then recovery from the ruthless excision of this hitherto unsuspected cancer is complete, and the Soviet body politic all the healthier from the operation. The plan for 1937 was to increase output over 1936 by 20 per cent. The 1937 purge of managing personnel engendered what, under conditions of Soviet planning, amounts to a slump: for the first half of the year output did not exceed the first half of the previous year, but it began to pick up in later months. In setting the plan for 1938, the government decided on an increase of 15.3 per cent., hoping the new administrative personnel (young Soviet technicians, students and stakhanovite workmen) would get into stride quickly enough. Every month since the beginning of this year has shown an increasing output margin over the corresponding month of last year, so that in July the government revised the plan upwards to give an increase of 21 per cent. over 1937. This bears out my impression that the new executives are filling their jobs more efficiently than

their predecessors, an impression formed from personal knowledge of both types and from reports in this year's industrial press. The internal weakness thus overcome is probably the last, and certainly one of the most serious because unseen of the obstacles to immediate military strength and future economic development.

Sources :

1. *World Economy in 1936*, published by the Soviet Institute for World Economy. (In Russian.)

2. *Planned Economy* No. 4, 1938, article by by Y. Yoffe "Level of Production in the U. S. S. R. and Capitalist Countries," "in which methods of computation and weighting are indicated. The figures cannot pretend to final exactness, but are the most careful attempt to compare Soviet and World production so far made. Other calculations put the Soviet share higher. (In Russian.)

3. *U.S.S.R.—Country of Socialism*, Moscow, 1936 (in Russian). A statistical rertpo issued by the Central Statistical Board to illustrate economic development up to the introduction of the new constitution.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN PALESTINE

By K. N. K.

The Background—Imperialist Interest

No account of the present disturbances in Palestine can possibly be of any use which omits their political and economic background. The present situation in Palestine is the direct result of British policy in Palestine and the Near East since the beginning of the last war. Then Britain had two main objectives: firstly to strike at Turkey and secondly to secure her Imperial lines of communication in the Mediterranean. Combining these two objectives, controdictory promises were made to the Palestine Arabs and the Jews in return for their aid to the Allies. The Arabs were promised independence and the Zionist Jews were promised Palestine as a 'National Home.' Ever since that time, the Palestine Mandate has been used by British Imperialism as an instrument to keep the Jews and the Arabs divided in Palestine, to play off Zionist aspirations against the Arab desire for independence and thus to maintain and consolidate her Imperialist stranglehold on Palestine. Britain has considerable strategic and financial interests in Palestine, the latter partly in alliance with Zionist capitalism. Palestine occupies a key strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean within the Imperialist line of communications, as a naval, military or air base, as one of the termini (Haifa) of the the Mosul Pipe line and as an Eastern Gate to the Suez Canal. This strategic importance increases in in proportion to the growing menace of Fascist Italy in the Mediterranean. Then again, Britain has considerable financial vested interests in Palestine, including investments made by British banks and insurance firms in Jewish building and development estimated at nearly 20 million pounds, besides the investments that have been made by the London market in the Palestine Govt. Guaranteed Loans. There is a certain amount of interlinking of British Imperial interests with the interests of Zionist capitalism, a feature that helps Britain

to keep the Jewish masses divided from the Arab masses.

For the last 18 years, under the cloak of the Mandate, the Palestine Arabs have been subjected to a regime of undiluted British autocracy. The whole executive and legislative power is concentrated in the hands of the British High Commissioner who takes his orders from Whitehall. As regards the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, its supervision is, as is well known, largely fictitious. Puppet legislative Councils—the classical device of British Imperialism—were offered to the Arabs on three different occasions and were either withdrawn afterwards or else refused by the Arabs. The position today is hardly worse even in the most backward African colonies.

The economic background of the Arab struggle for independance is equally important. Here the root of the matter is the agrarian problem—the problem of the appalling poverty of the Arab peasantry due to land shortage, oppressive taxation, chronic indebtedness and lack of capital to develop the land. The purchase of land by the Zionists from absentee Arab landlords for Jewish settlement has resulted in the progressive eviction of Arab tenants with little or no compensation from their lands and homes, the progressive diminution of the size of individual holdings and the progressive swelling of the ranks of the precarious Arab town proletariat. There the chauvinistic policy of the Histadruth (Jewish Federation of Labour) of barring Arab workers completely from Jewish concerns has led to sharp competition and undercutting and acute friction between the Arab and the Jewish workers. The oppressive rate of taxation has in several cases left the Arab small-holder no alternative but to sell his land and drift to the towns. According to a report made by Sir John Hope-Simpson in 1930, the average minimum necessary expenditure of an Arab peasant was more than twice his average gross income. Proposals made by certain commissions for agricultural relief were all shelved through pressure from vested interests.

The 1936 Strike

While prior to 1929 the struggle of the Arabs was mainly directed against the Jews, since then the movement has more and more taken on an anti-imperialist character and with it a mass democratic character too. The General Strike and Civil Disobedience Movement of 1936 was a tremendous mass movement of a nation-wide character. Three demands were presented then to Britain:

(1) the imediate stoppage of Jewish immigration ;

(2) the enactment of Legislation to prevent further sales of land to Jews ;

(3) the setting up of a responsible National Government.

The Arab fear is that once they are dominated numerically and hence politically, by the Jews, they would lose all hope of achieving political independence. Economically, the Arabs are already dominated by the Jews who control the country's industries and jointly with Britain its finances. Add to this the economic consequences of Jewish purchase of land upon the Arab peasantry, described above. The 1936 General Strike was broken by a campaign of British terrorism of unprecedented barbarity. Wholesale destruction of Arab

villages and property. Collective fines on villages, indiscriminate bombing and shooting, unchecked rule of the military and the police—such were and are the methods employed in the name of "law and order."

The Peel Commission which was sent after the 'suppression' of the 1936 Revolt reported that what was going on in Palestine was a definite Anti-Imperialist revolt; that in spite of the suppression of the Arab revolt no Arab witness came forward to give evidence; and recommended a scheme of partition, which has now been condemmned as unworkable by the fact-finding Woodhead Commission. This latest report of the commission appointed by Imperialism throws illuminating light on the interests of British Imperialism. They admit that the Arab boycott was complete and Arab hostility pronounced. They admit the misgivings of the Jewish financial interests. They admit the necessity for preservation of interests military as well as economic. They examine all schemes of partition and declare none is too satisfactory. They confess that rather than report failure they have suggested a scheme of partition. On their own admission this scheme withholds fiscal autonomy for both the Arab and the Jewish states. A more ingenious attempt to fly in the face of facts and a more effective proof of the conflict of interests it is hard to find.

The 'Dual Policy'

British Imperialism, rather than admit its inherent inability to solve this problem and the effectiveness of the Anti-Imperialist movement, is enacting another farce similar to the one it did in the case of our Country. It has ostensibly given up the question of partition and declared itself ready to have a conference in London on this question. The Colonial Secretary, faithfully carrying on the tradition of his father, Ramsay Macdonald has even come out with a declaration of 'Appreciation' of the Arab attitude. The invitations to the Conference will be sent out by British Imperialism and though this latest move appears to be a concession, in reality, it is a clever attempt to exclude the real representatives of the Arab and Jewish masses and wean away the natural sympathies of the Arabs of the neighbouring states and even a section of the leadership. The dual policy of 'conciliation' and 'restoration of Law and Order' is being played once again. British Imperialism that has learnt a lesson from the Indian problem has declared brazenly that should the London Conference fail to reach any agreement the Government are determined to go ahead with their proposals.

This attempt to defeat the Anti-Imperialist revolt of the Arab people is going ahead. At the time of writing while the preparations for the London Conference are being made large territories are being occuppied and recaptured by the powerful armies of British Imperialism. The urgent task of restoring 'Law and Order.' of restoring British domination at the point of the bayonet is being fulfilled.

The Peel Commission, which was sent to Palestine after the suppression of the 1936 movement, declared the Mandate unworkable. It recomended the partitioning of Palestine into an Arab State and a Jewish State, with British Mandates over the most vital and strategic points. The scheme has been universally opposed by the Arab groups

and even by a large part of Jewish leadership. This partition plan is an obvious attempt to perpetuate the artificially created conflict between the Arabs and the Jews and thus to clamp on the hold of British Imperialism on Palestine tighten still. From the point of view of the Jewish masses, the scheme is thoroughly objectionable and will not solve any of their problems. The creation of a separate Jewish state by emphasizing the Jews' "Jewishness" will only justify the Fascist theories of racial exclusion and segregation and thus aggravate the evil of Fascist anti-semitism. It will divert the Jewish masses in the various countries from their real task, which is to take their place with the other democratic and progressive forces in the common struggle against the common enemy, the forces of Fascism and of reactionary monopoly-capitalism. Besides, a Jewish state in Palestine cut off from its natural economic markets in Arab Palestine and Transjordan and surrounded by a virulently hostile Arab world would turn out to be nothing but a reactionary garrison of British Imperialism in the Near East. And lastly it is questionable whether the proposed Jewish State could absorb a substantial additional number of Jewish refugees.

The Revolt and Fascist Intuigues

One of the most important questions to be considered here is the connection between the Arab movement and Italian and German Fascism—a question that has been played up to mischievous proportions in several quarters. Since British Imperialism is using the Zionist aspirations in Palelstine for its own Imperialist purposes as a lever against the Arab desire for independence, it is quite natural that the rival imperialisms of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy should seize on the other end of the stick for their own purposes, and in their Anti-Jewish barbarities figure as the champions of Palestinian Arabs. The Bari broadcasts, Italian and German assistance to a section of the Arab leadership, Mussolini's bombastic arrogation of the title of "Defender of Islam" etc., are all wellknown. It is true, besides, that a section of the Arab leadership is permeated with Fascist ideology. But and this is the fact conveniently overlooked by many, it is a far cry from all this to assert that the Arab movement is completely dominated by Fascism, German or Italian. This is completely wrong. Fundamentally, the Arab struggle in Palestine is an anti-Imperialist and hence democratic struggle as the nation-wide mass movement of 1936 unmistakeably shows. The real fact is that the Arabs have been engaged in a long and arduous course of struggle against the terrorist autocracy of British Imperialism and if some sections of their leadership have turned towards Fascism for support, it is simply and solely because they have not received any support from their natural allies, the Jewish masses and Labour movement, as well as the British Labour movement. It is the mistaken policy of these two movements which is mainly responsible, and if this is rectified, the Arab masses may be relied upon to draw their lessons from Libya and Abyssinia.

The Solution—Common and United Struggle of Jewish Fascist Masses

There is only one solution for the Palestine problem—the Jewish masses should get together with the Arab masses and co-operate to solve their common problems. The deep designs of British

Imperialism must be defeated and a democratic responsible government must be established, representative of Jews and Arabs on a proportional basis. Such a government, embodying voluntary co-operation between the Jews and the Arabs without mischievous interference from British Imperialism, should enact a comprehensive scheme of agrarian legislation to guarantee the right of the Arab peasant to his land and to relieve his lot in other ways. Once British Imperialism is forced to withdraw from Palestine under the common pressure of Arab and Jewish masses the question of Jewish immigration would lose its political and economic sigificance and the democratic responsible government could tackle the problem with sympathy and with regard for economic absorptive capacity of the country. The blow will be struck at the "influence" of fascist reactionaries over a section of the Arab leadership. The maximum amount of adminstrative and cultural local autonomy should be established. The Jews could have their minority citizenship rights guaranteed only under a completely independent Palestine free alike from the perfidious teachery of Britain and the barbaric designs of fascist reaction. The only real guarantee for the Jews in an independent Palestine would be the formation of a strong, united bi-national Labour and Trade Union movement, embracing Arab and Jewish masses alike, which in alliance with the British Labour movement, would act as a bulwark against all varieties of Fascism inside Palestine as well as outside. This is neither a pro-Arab nor a pro-Jew solution, but the only democratic solution possible. Any other solution would be extremely detrimental to the cause of oppressed Jewry in the long run and would, besides, have as its only sanction British bayonets.

THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT

By Bankim Mukerji

[We are publishing below an important article on the Permanent Settlement by the Vice President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and who is also a respected leader of the Bengal Kisans.

Bengal is ground down by the Permanent Settlement. Huq rode to power on the strength of the slogan—Abolish the Permanent Settlement. After the elections were over, he went in for a coalition with reactionary land owners and formed his Ministry, and threw overboard his electoral pledges. Bengal Congress has been dominated by Hindu landlords. Under their pressure, the Congress in Bengal did not boldly advance the slogan of abolition of the Permanent Settlement and thus mobilise the peasant millions behind the Congress. In the meanwhile, the peoples' movement has been growing in Bengal, a powerful Kisan movement is arising. Huq has attempted to divert and suppress this discontent. He has been pressed to appoint a Permanent Settlement Committee which will investigate and make recommendations. This is the occasion for Bengal Congress to come out as the champion of progress and defender of the rights of tenants who are being ruthlessly exploited by an archaic system of land-tenure. Com. Mukherji has not only given an account of the criticism of this system but also made some valuable suggestions. We hope they will be seriously and widely discussed.—*Editor*.]

Of all the forms of "Asiatic exploitation" which western writers are so fond of talking about, there is probably not one which has ever produced a greater accumulation of miseries for the cultivators of the soil than the Bengal Permanent Settlement. Now, when the demand is being more and more widely raised that it should be permanent no longer, it is as well for reformers to run their eyes over the history of the system and understand how it came into being.

For Socialists at any rate, the principle that land morally belongs to whoever spends his life working on it, hardly needs argument. In the socialistic society of the future, the idea of a class of people having a blackmail right to levy tribute on the cultivator will seem absolutely barbarous. When we look at the question in legal instead of moral terms, we find that so far at least as Indian history is concerned, the ownership of the soil was legally also vested at all times in the cultivator. Whether under the ancient Hindu States or under the Moslem rule, the land was owned by the village community, under various complicated forms. The State never claimed to own the land, it only claimed to receive a proportion, variously fixed, of the produce, to be used for public purposes. Thus what the peasant paid was not rent, but tax. Nor could individuals acquire a right of ownership from the State at the expense of the village community. It is true that from the beginning and especially under the Moghuls, it was customary for the State to reward its ministers or favourites by granting them part or all of the revenue of a certain area. This was not at all the same thing as to grant them absolute ownership of that area. It is true also that the peasant was often robbed before the British came to India. But he was not robbed heavily or systematically enough to destroy his proprietory rights, and in any case robbery by the Moghul nobles is not a good excuse for robbery by British legislators.

The Two Bases

The Permanent Settlement of 1793 was preceded by long argumentation in Government circles about what revenue system should be adopted, and laborious collection of evidence. Official attitudes in those days were marked by two conflicting tendencies ; a wealth of philanthropical sentiment and of zeal for reform and the good of the people, and on the other side an unlimited desire for money. Which tendency had the upper hand, is fairly clear from the history of those decades after the seizure of Bengal. They were the years when the English, as Macaulay wrote, devoured the natives like wolves devouring sheep. It was not very likely that in the Settlement philanthropy would truimph over greed.

Ostensibly, however, the Settlement was designed to satisfy both desires. It rested on two main bases. First, the existing zemindars and taluqdars of Bengal recognised as the *owners* of their estates. Secondly, the amount of revenue payable by them to the Government was fixed for ever at a certain definite figure. The first of these changes was an unheard of innovation in the Indian history. The zemindars and taluqdars were not landowners ; they were Mogul officials, often hereditary, but dismissable at will, whose duty had been to collect taxes and remit them to the State, retaining a certain portion by way of salary. What the anarchy of the Moghul decline had been unable to do for them, the Settlement accomplished

at one blow. They became owners of the land, including vast stretches of unoccupied land, on the sole condition of paying a fixed amount. What they got was not given out of the State's pocket, but seized from the Villagers. Considering that Parliament had ordered the Settlement to be made in accordance with Indian custom, one might even say that it was illegal.

Curiously enough, the authorities do not seem to have been at all clear about what they were doing. In later official statements and legal decisions, we find over and over again it being said that the Settlement was not intended to deprive the peasant of his land; that it intended rather to give the zemindar an intermediate status, fixity of tenure but nominal rather than absolute landownership. At any rate, there is no doubt that the Settlement was accompanied and followed by the most solemn declaration that the Government would protect the rights of the peasant and prevented his being victimised by his landlord.

Organised Exploitation and Terrorism

The argument put forward in defence of the Settlement was that with fixity of tenure and payments the zemindar would learn to apply himself to agricultural improvement, build up the prosperity of his estate, and thus become content himself and contribute to the welfare of the community. Actually, the reasons for the Settlement were different. The Government had no administrative machine, and was unable to collect taxes by itself. It was extremely unpopular, and was forced to look for allies. It was desperately in need of cash to send to the Company in London.

These motives were all satisfied, and all at the expense of the peasant. The zemindars collected the Government's money, and gradually became its firm supporters as they are to-day. Content with this, the Government ignored its promises to peasants in the most flagrant way. It did not make the slightest effort to see that the revenue burden was passed on to the cultivator. The zemindar was supposed to give his tenants a document stating the amount of their rent, in accordance with the traditional figures of the locality. Hardly any such documents were actually given, and the zemindar was free to go on screwing rent up and up, especially when growth of population increased pressure on the land. When the peasant complained, he was subjected to violence at the hands of the zemindars gang of thugs. If he did not like that, a charge was trumped against him in a distant and expensive law-court. The idea that the zemindar would become a sort of British country gentleman, studying the most up-to-date ways of growing turnips, soon vanished into smoke. It would be hard to point to any Bengal land lord in the 19th century who took any pains to make his estate more prosperous. It was much easier to make money by pure robbery from the tenants, with the backing of the police when necessary.

By the middle of the century, the system of organised exploitation and terrorism in the countryside was so bad that missionaries found it necessary to set up funds to help their converts, and rescue them from what was practically slavery to the landlords.

A Ruinous System

The resulsts of the Permanent Settlement are plain, and may be summed up briefly. For the peasant, they were

ruin. It is wellknown that the masses in Bengal at this day are in a situation that could hardly be worse. They are gravely undernourished, they are ravaged by preventible diseases that attack them all the more because of their malnutrition, education and other social services are rudimentary, the' old network of canals on which the prosperity of the country largely depends has been allowed to fall into decay. For the Government, in a sense the result has been equally bad. That is to say the revenue fixed in 1793 was originally more than nine-tenths of what was raised from the peasant, but with the rise of prices and the increased rate of exploitation it has since sunk to a mere fraction. The people are paying enormously the State is receiving little—exactly as in France before the French Revolution. The British authorities are reconciled to this, because land-revenue is no longer their only source of supply as in 1793, and because they get in return the political support of a strong class. But when popularly elected leaders try to push through reforms and raise the standard of the people, it will be important for them to have enough revenue to do effective work with and they will find all the disposable wealth of the community being monopolised by purely parasitic classes.

The effects on the economic structure of Bengal has been fantistic. The original zemindars were often incompetent, and their descendants showed a marked tendency towards imbecility. They let out their estates to lesser tax-collectors, who also became hereditary with semi proprietory rights. These soon sublet to still smaller men. And so on, until there might be a dozen grades of hungry idlers between the peasant and the landlord. At the bottom, a similar process commenced, the peasant sublet to landless men, and these again later on to others. When the actual cultivators had such a series of burdens on their back, Bengal naturally became the money-lenders' Paradise that it is to-day and the peasant's scanty income was drained off in a fresh direction.

No Tinkering Will Do

As might be expected, Government efforts at checking these evils were negligible. In the later 19th century, two are three Tenancy Acts were framed, to give the cultivator some security of status and some protection from terrorism. They scarcely had the slightest effect. To-day, something different must be demanded. To-day reform is pressed for, not by a few officials of the bettor sort but by the National Congress backed by the masses of peasants who are learning to organise themselves in their own Krishak Samitis. No tinkering at the problem will do. When the next slump and collapses of agricultural prices come, nothing can be expected but absolute agrarian anarchy, unless there has been in the meantime drastic reform.

It is true that a full solution of the Bengal Peasant's troubles cannot be reached inside the framework of Imperialism. The imperialist system is bound up with reaction and economic stagnation. But that is all the more reason for pressing immediate reform. The slogan of abolishing the Permanent Settlement will, if carried into effect, cut at one of the bases of imperialism by destroying one of its reactionary allies; it will fill the national movement with new and healthy energy; it will strengthen the purchasing power of the masses

and so render possible the programme of industrialisation towards which Congress is now working. Incidentally, it will do away with communalism in Bengal, and accustom the peasants to intelligent co-operation which will eventually mature into the socialisation of agriculture.

Votaries of Non-Violence

Meanwhile, we have the fine spectacle of the zemindars—not only in Bengal-howling at the threat to their "rights" and appealing to non-violence. If presumably a man wakens up in the morning and finds another man sitting on his chest, he must not push him off, because that would be violent. It is not, however, at all "violent" for the second man to go on sitting on his chest. There is a good deal to be said for the idea that pure expropriation would meet the case. When a man acquires property in slaves, after slavery has become offensive to the moral sense of the community, he is not entitled to compensation when slavery is abolished. On the other hand it might be argued that capital has been forced to flow into land and multiply grades of landownership, because the destruction of Bengal's old manufacturers gave no other outlet. At any rate, we must be clear on the principle that compensation must not be excessive. Landowners have been bought-out in many countries, and in some, e.g. Ireland the sum to be paid to the landlords was so great that the peasants, who had to go on paying the interest on the sum, got was so great that the peasants, who had to go on paying the interest on the sum, got practically no relief. Some of better zemindars will be ready to accept reasonable compensation; others of those who are clamouring to be bought out will be anxious to make as much as they can.

The Immediate Need

Supposing that compensation is to be given, how is the process of reform to be carried through? Some details can be suggested, but the whole thing needs careful discussion. The first thing for a Congress Ministry to do after getting into power and setting about reforms on the lines hinted at in Sarat Bose's speech of August 12, would be to enforce a moratorium on peasant debts. This would have to be followed up by creation of a network of credit banks to help the peasant on fair terms. The money-lender cannot expect much money-compensation, but he might be utilised among the personnal of the new credit system. Then, the rents paid by the peasants would have to be fixed by law, at a low level; and the Government would, as rapidly as machinery could be organised, take over from the landlords the duty of collecting them. At the outset, the Government would pay to the landlords what they had been receiving its own share would not decrease, for great economies would be effected by honest collectorship—and keep the rest. The landlords would pay back part of what they got, in the shape of a stifly—graduated income tax. As soon as these measures were under way, the Government would float a loan to be used for the buying out of landlords. This need not be done all at once; but it should not be allowed to take up too long a period.

The slogan of "Abolish the Permanent Settlement" is the correct one; it means relief for both the peasants and the State, and the release of Bengals economic energies. But we have to mobilise all elements in Congress in favour of it. and at the same time study closely the details of the plan we propose to adopt.

THE FIRST STRIKE IN INDIA

[When did the first strike take place in India? When was the first attempt to form Trade Unions of Indian Workers made? In the following article we reproduce an extract from Mr. Buchanan's book "The development of Capitalist Enterprise in India" (MacMillan & Co. 1935) which answers the question. The early history of Strikes in the oldest organised industries, namely Cotton Textiles and Jute, is extremely interesting. The earliest sources of information about the conditions of labour in Bombay, are the papers of the Parliamentary Commission which investigated them in the eighties. From the evidence before this commission one finds that stoppages of work in individual mills was already common. But according to the testimony of this book a general stoppage of work in the industry as a whole for the purpose of securing labour demands did not take place in Bombay till after the war. We are reprinting this passage to draw the attention of Comrades to the importance of investigation into the early history of labour and kisan movements in India.—*Editor*.]

The first concerted action by a large number of the factory labourers of a district appears to have occurred in Bombay in 1884 when the Bombay Factory Commission was investigating the situation preparatory to suggesting changes in the meagre Factory Act which had been put into effect in 1881. Two great meetings of mill-hands were held in Bombay, and a resolution, reported as signed by about 5,000 workers, was presented to the Commission. Five specific reforms were requested:

1. That all mill-hands be allowed one complete day of rest every Sunday.

2. That half an hour recess be allowed them at noon every working day.

3. That work in mills should commence at 6 a.m. and cease at sunset.

4. That payment of wages be made not later than the 15th of the month following that for which they had been earned.

5. That a workman sustaining serious injury in the course of his work at the mill, which may disable him for a time, should receive full wages until he recovers, and that in the case of his being maimed for life, suitable provision be made for his livelihood.

The correspondence between the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy indicates that the London Government was concerned about the "views of the mill hands"; it also desired to comply, perhaps under pressure, from the manufacturing interests in England, with the recommendations of the Berlin conference.

But even this apparent labour action was not the work of actual labour men, although it may be supposed to have expressed opinions which they held. The moving spirit appears to have been the Hon. Sorabji S. Bengali, an energetic reformer, who did much to create public opinion favouring labour legislation. The proposals were put through by *Mr. M. N. Lokhanday*, a local editor, who signed himself, "Local Member of the Factory Commission for the Bombay Presidency and the President of the Mill-hands Association."

In 1889, during the discussion of the revision of the Factory Act of 1881, Mr. Lokhanday, as president of the Bombay Mill-hands' Association, presented to the Viceroy, the set of resolutions drawn up in 1884. The very existence of the Association was scarcely known to the Bombay employers. Three years later, when the government was making the extensive inquiry referred to above, the Collector of Bombay stated that the Association did very little to help in the presentation of the case. Had the factory inspector not taken their part, there would have been almost no presentation of the labourers' point of view.

Mr. Lokhanday remarks upon the difficulty experienced in getting workers to become indentified with his "association" because of the fear of losing their positions. The Inspector of factories described this "association" as "a kind of mill hands' association, but it is quite in its infancy—a factor which can hardly influence the relation between the employer and the employed in any way, at least for the present.

(From Dr. BUCHANAN'S "*Development of Capitalist Enterprise in India*" MacMillan & Co.—1935)

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL AND ITS PLACE IN HISTORY

By V. I. Lenin

(*Written in April 1919*)

[This year's Lenin Day falls on the 20th Anniversary of the Communist International, which was founded in March 1919. That is why this little known article of Lenin on the Third International has special significance. This article brings out the relation which the 3rd International bears to the past two Internationals.

In the stormy days when this article was written, the post-war period of Proletarian Revolution, was not yet closed. Conditions were still favourable for the immediate capture of power by the revolutionary proletariat. The bourgeois counter revolutionary was in those days hiding behind "bourgeois democracy" which was being used as a cloak to crush the revolutionary movement of the proletariat (especially as in 1918–20 and in 1923 in Germany). The choice before the toiling masses in those days, was between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy. It was a choice between Revolution and Counter Revolution. It was because the International with Lenin at its head, gave the correct lead, that we are able to celebrate the glorious achievements of the USSR from year to year; that we are able to greet the Communist International which is leading the desperate and final fight that is raging all over the world—in Spain, China, in Europe, Asia and America—the fight against fascism, the most reactionary phase of capitalism.—*Editor*.]

The Imperialists of the "Entente" countries are blockading Russia, are striving to cut off the Soviet Republic as a hotbed of infection from the capitalist world. These people, who boast about the "democracy" of their institutions, are so blinded by their hatred for the Soviet Republic that they fail to observe that they are making themselves ridiculous. Just think: the advanced, most civilised and "democratic" countries, armed to the teeth, enjoying unchallenged military sway over the whole world, are mortally afraid of the ideological infection coming from a ruined, starving, backward, and as they assert, even semi-savage country.

This contradiction alone is opening the eyes of the masses of the toilers in all countries and helps to expose the hypocrisy of the imperialists Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Wilson and their governments.

But it is not only the blindness of the capitalists in their hatred for the Soviets that is helping us, but also their mutual quarrels which induce them to put spokes in each other's wheels. They have entered into a veritable conspiracy of silence, for the thing they fear most of all, is the spread of true information about the Soviet Republic in general, and its official documents in particular. However, the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, *Le Temps*, has published a report of the foundation in Moscow of the Third Communist International.

For this, we express to the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, to this leader of French chauvinism and imperialism, our most profound gratitude. We are prepared to send to *Le Temps* an illuminated address expressing our appreciation of the effective and able assistance it is giving us.

The manner in which *Le Temps* compiled its report on the basis of our radio message, clearly and fully reveals the motive that prompted this organ of the money-bags. It wanted to have a dig at Wilson, as if to say: Look at the people you want to enter into negotiations with! The wiseacres who write to the order of the money-bags, failed to observe that their attempt to frighten Wilson with the bogey of the Bolsheviks is transformed in the eyes of the masses of the toilers into an advertisement for the Bolsheviks. Once again, we express our most profound gratitude to the organ of the French millionaires.

The Third International was formed in such a world situation that no prohibitions, no petty and miserable tricks of the "Entente" imperialists, or of the lackeys of capitalism, such as the Scheidemanns in Germany and the Renners in Austria, can hinder news about this International and sympathy towards it, from spreading among the working class of the whole world. This situation was created by the proletarian revolution, which daily and hourly is manifestly growing everywhere. This situation was created by the Soviet movement among the masses of the toilers, which has already achieved such force that it has become really international.

Heritage of the Two Internationals

The First International (1864-1872) laid the foundation of the international organisation of the workers in order to prepare for their revolutionary onslaught on capital. The Second International (1889-1914) was the international organisation of the proletarian movement

which grew in breadth, and this entailed a temporary drop in the revolutionary level, temporary increase in the strength of opportunism, which, in the end, led to the disgraceful collapse of this International.

The Third International was actually created in 1918, when the long process of struggle against opportunism and social-chauvinism, particularly during the war, led to the formation of Communist Parties in a number of countries. Officially, the Third International was formed at its Congress, in March, 1919, in Moscow. And the most characteristic feature of this International is its mission to carry out, to put into practice, the behests of Marxism, and to achieve the century-old ideals of Socialism and the working class movement—this very characteristic feature of the Third International manifested itself immediately in that the new, Third, "International Workingmens Association," has already begun to coincide, to a certain extent, with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian international struggle for socialism.

The Second International marked the epoch in which the soil was prepared for a broad, mass, widespread movement in a number of countries.

The Third International gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International purged it of its opportunist, social-chauvinist, bourgeois, and petty-bourgeois dress, and has begun to effect the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The international alliance of the Parties which are leading the most revolutionary movement in the world, the movement of the proletariat for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, now has a basis of unprecedented firmness: several Soviet Republics, which on an international scale are putting into effect the dictatorship of the proletariat, its victory over capitalism.

The world-historical significance of the Third, Communist International lies in that it has begun to put into practice Marx's greatest slogan which sums up the century-old development of Socialism, and the working class movement, the slogan which is expressed by the term: *dictatorship of the proletariat.*

This brilliant forecast, this brilliant theory, is becoming a reality.

This Latin phrase has now been translated into the languages of all the peoples of contemporary Europe—more than that, into all the languages of the world.

A new epoch in world history has begun.

Mankind is throwing off the last form of slavery: capitalist or wage slavery.

Emancipating itself from slavery, mankind is for the first time passing to real liberty.

Why Russia Made the 'Leap'

How is it that the first country to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat to organise a Soviet Republic, was one of the most backward of European countries? We shall not be mistaken if we say that it is precisely this contradiction betwen the backwardness of Russia and its "leap" to the higher form of democracy, its leap across bourgois democracy to Soviet, or proletarian democracy, that it was precisely this contradiction that was one of the reasons (apart from the burden of opportunist habits and philistine preju-

dices, that oppressed the majority of the leaders of Socialism) which, in the West, particularly hindered, or retarded, the understanding of the role of the Soviets.

The masses of the workers all over the world instinctively appreciated the significance of the Soviets as a weapon in the struggle of the proletariat and as the form of the proletarian state. But the leaders who were corrupted by opportunism continued and now continue to worship bourgeois democracy, calling it "democracy" in general.

Is it surprising that the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat first of all revealed the "contradiction" between the backwardness of Russia and its "leap" across bourgeois democracy? It would have been surprising had history granted us the establishment of a new form of democracy without a number of contradictions.

If any Marxist, in fact, if any person who is familiar with modern science were asked whether the even, or harmoniously proportionate transition of different capitalist countries to the dictatorship of the proletariat was probable, he would undoubtedly answer in the negative. Neither evenness, nor proportion ever existed in the world of capitalism; nor could it exist. Each country developed with particular prominence, first one, and then another aspect, or feature, or group of qualities of capitalism and of the working class movement. The process of development was uneven.

Why the Advanced Countries Lagged Behind

When France was making her great bourgeois revolution and rousing the whole Continent of Europe to a historically new life, England was at the head of the counter-revolutionary coalition, although she was capitalistically much more developed than France. And the English working class movement of that epoch brilliantly anticipated much of subsequent Marxism.

When England was giving the world the first, broad, really mass, politically formed, proletarian revolutionary movement, namely Chartism, bourgeois revolutions, most of them weak ones, were taking place on the continent of Europe, and in France, the first great civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie broke out, The bourgeoisie in the various countries defeated the various national units of the proletariat one by one, and in different ways.

England served as an example of a country in which, as Engels expressed it, the bourgeoisie, side by side with a bourgeois aristocracy, created the most bourgeois upper stratum of the proletariat. For several decades, the advanced capitalist countries proved to be backward in regard to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. France, as it were, exhausted the strength of the proletariat in two heroic rebellions of the working class against the bourgeoisie in 1848 and 1871, which were of unusually great world-historical significance. Then the hegemony in the International, of the working class movement passed to Germany, in the seventies of the nineteenth century, when Germany was economically behind England and France. And when Germany ultimately surpassed these two countries economically, i.e., in the second decade of the 20th century, a handful of arch scoundrels, the filthiest blackguards, who had sold themselves to the capitalists—from Scheidemann and Noske to David and Legion—the most revolting executioners from the

ranks of the workers in the service of monarchy and of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, were found to be at the head of the Marxist workers' party of Germany, which had been a model for the whole world.

World history is undeviatingly marching towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it is far from marching towards it by smooth, simple and straight paths.

When Karl Kautsky was still a Marxist and not the renegade of Marxism that he became when he began to champion unity with the Scheidemanns and bourgeois democracy in opposition to Soviet or proletarian democracy, he, in the very beginning of the 20th century, wrote an article entitled, "The Slavs and Revolution." In this article, he enunciated the historical conditions that would make possible the transition of hegemony in the international revolutionary movement, to the Slavs.

This is what has happened. For a time—it goes without saying that it is only for a short time—hegemony in the revolutionary, proletarian International has passed to the Russians in the same way as at various periods in the 19th century it was enjoyed by the English, then by the French, and then by the Germans.

I have had occasion more than once to say that, compared with the advanced countries, it was easier for the Russians to start the great proletarian revolution, but that it will be more difficult for them to continue it and carry it to complete victory, in the sense of organising complete Socialist society.

It was easier for us to start, first, because the unusual—for Europe of the 20 the century—political backwardness of the tsarist monarchy stimulated a revolutionary attack by the masses, of unusual force. Secondly, Russia's backwardness in a peculiar way merged the proletarian revolution against the bourgeoisie with the peasant revolution against the landlords. We started with this in November 1917, and we would not have achieved victory so easily then, had we not started with this. As long ago as 1856, Marx, pointed to the possibility of a peculiar combination of proletarian revolution and peasant war. Since the beginning of 1905, the Bolsheviks have advocated the idea of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Thirdly, the 1905 revolution did ever so much to assist the political education of the masses of workers and peasants in the sense of making their vanguard familiar with "the last word" in Socialism in the West, as well as in the sense of the revolutionary action of the masses, without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905 the revolutions of 1917—the bourgeois, February Revoltuion, as well as the proletarian October Revolution—would have been impossible. Fourthly, the geographical conditions of Russia permitted her to hold out against the superior external forces of the capitalist advanced countries longer than other countries. Fifthly, the peculiar relations between the proletariat and the peasantry facilitated the transition from the bourgeois revolution to the Socialist revolution, facilitated the spread of the influence of the urban proletarians over the semi-proletarian, the poorest strata of the toilers in the rural districts. Sixthly, the long schooling in strike struggles and the experience of the European mass working class movement facilitated the rise—in

the midst of a profound and rapidly intensified revolutionary situation—of a peculiar form of proletarian revolu tionary organisation such as the Soviets.

This list is incomplete of course; but for the time being it will suffice.

Significance of Soviet Democracy

Soviet or proletarian democracy was born in Russia. The second step of world-historical importance was taken after the Paris Commune. The proletarian—peasant Soviet Republic proved to be the first stable Socialist Republic in the world. As a new type of state, it cannot die now. It no longer stands alone.

For the purpose of continuiug the work of building Socialism, for the purpose of completing the work of construction, a very great deal is still required. The Soviet republics of the more cultured countries, in which the proletariat has greater weight and influence, have every chance of overtaking Russia as soon as they take the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The bankrupt Second International is now dying and decomposing alive. Actually, it is playing the role of lackey to the international bourgeosie. It is a really yellow International. Its most prominent ideological leaders, like Kautsky, laud bourgeois democracy and call it "democracy" in general, or—what is still more stupid and still more crude —"pure democracy".

Bourgeois vs. Soviet Democracy

Bourgeois democracy is obsolete, and so also is the Second International, which performed, historically necessary and useful work when the problem of training the masses of the workers within the framework of this bourgeois democracy was the order of the day.

The most democratic bourgeois republic was never, nor could it be anything else than a machine with which capital suppressed the toilers, an instrument of the political rule of capital, of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The democratic bourgeois republic promised the rule of the majority, it proclaimed the rule of the majority, but it could never put this into effect as long as the private ownership of the land and other means of production existed.

In the bourgeois—democratic republic, "freedom" was really freedom for the rich. The Proletarians and the toiling peasants could and should have utilised it for the purpose of preparing their forces for overthrowing capital, for overcoming bourgeois democracy; in fact, however, as a general rule, the masses of the toilers were unable to make use of democracy under capitalism.

For the first time in history Soviet or proletarian democracy created democracy for the masses, for the toilers; for the workers and small peasants.

Never before in history has there been a state representing the majority of the population, the actual rule of the majority, such as is the Soviet State,

It suppresses the "freedom" of the exploiters and their accomplices; it deprives them of the "freedom" to make profit out of starvation, the "freedom" to fight for the restoration of the rule of capital, the "freedom" to come to an agreement with the foreign bourgeoisie in opposition to the workers and peasants in their own country.

Let Kautsky champion such freedom. In order to do that, one must be a renegade of Marxism, a renegade of Socialism.

Bankruptcy of the 2nd International

Nothing has so strikingly expressed the bankruptcy of the ideologic leaders of the Second International like Hilferding and Kautsky, as their complete inability to understand the significance of the Soviet or proletarian democracy, its relation to the Paris Commune, its place in history, that it is necessary as the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

No. 74, of Die Freiheit, the organ of the "Independent" (read: philistine, petty-bourgeois) German Social-Democracy, of February 11, 1919, published a "Manifesto to the Revolutionary Proletariat of Germany."

This manifesto is signed dy the Executive Committee of the Party and by its members in the "National Assembly" the German "Constituent Assembly."

This manifesto accuses the Scheidemanns of striving to abolish the Soviets, and it proposes—don't laugh—that the Soviets be combined with the constituent Assembly, that the Soviets be granted certain state rights, a certain place in the Constitution.

To reconcile, to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoise with the dictatorship of the proletariat! How simple! What brilliantly philistine idea.

The only pity is that this has been tried already in Russia, under Kerensky, by the united Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, these petty-bourgeois democrats who imagine that they are Socialists.

Those who have read Marx and have failed to understand that in capitalist society, at every actual moment, at every serious conflict of classess only dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat, is possible, have understood nothing about the enonomic or the political doctrines of Marx.

But the brilliantly philistine idea of Hilferding, Kautsky and Co. of peacefully combining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat must be dealt with separately if the economic and political absurdities heaped up in this very remarkable and comical manifesto of Ferbary 11 are to be plumbed to the depths.

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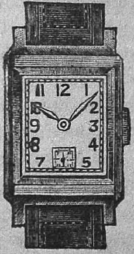

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(*Continued from Page 294*)

directly intervenes against the people and in favour of the Princes. Under the *Extradition Act* the Government of a State with the approval of the Political Agent may issue warrants against any of its subiect who at the moment is in British and demand his surrender. In November, two Secretaries and the Treasurer of the Talcher Prajamandal were arrested in the Congress Province of Orissa under warrants issued by the Talcher Durbar according to the information of Sjt. Sarangdhar Das, one of the foremost leaders of the Orissa States peoples movement no less that 25 Extradition warrants have been issued by the Dhenkanal State.

What is the Congress Ministry to do in this situation ? Can it permit the execution of the warrants ? That would mean handing over to the tender mercy of Princely tyrants, those, whose real offence —whatever the warrants may indicate— is their participation in the freedom movement. What punishment would be meted out to these "offenders" can be easily imagined.

It is reported that the Orissa Government has found some legal flaw in the Extradition orders and returned them to the states which issued them.

But that is not enough. *The issue is not primarily constitutional or legal but national and political.*

The Observer, the leading weekly or Orissa has sounded a note of warning "Let not the Congress Ministry of Orissa stultify the glorious organisation to which it has the honour to belong by playing into the designing hands of. . . . imperialism. . . . . To our popular Ministers the warrants that do not inspire the public confidence and can have no legitimate sanction behind them. . ."

The Orissa Ministry must firmly and decisively reject the outrageous demand that the States people who have sought shelter in its province should be handed over to the Princes, that it should give any help to the Princes for crushing the freedom movement of the States people.

Struggle—Against the Autocratic Centre

The Congress must direct its Ministers to refuse to permit the operation of the Princes Protection Act and the Extradition Act in their provinces. It must do more. The very existence of these Acts on the Statute Book constitutes a grave menace to the national movement. The Punjab Government has already extended the Princes Protection Act to several districts. It is not enough for the Congress to merely guarantee against the operation of these Acts in Congress Provinces. *They must be made inoperative everywhere. They must be removed from the Statute Book.*

Struggle against the autocratic centre

That demands a determined struggle against the present irresponsible and irresponsive Central Government.

By winning Power at the Centre alone will the Congress be able to prevent the utilisation of Indian troops for crushing the States Peoples' movement. Congress Ministries in the Provinces, if they take a firm stand, can prevent the operation of the States Protection and Extradition Acts. But they are powerless to prevent armed intervention by Imperialism against the States Peoples, powerless to end the regime of terror that has been established in Dhenkanel by Br. troops.

The Central Govt. alone has a say in the matter.

It is not a question of the states alone. All the repressive laws framed by the Central Government—laws which deny the freedom of speech, Press and Association, laws which arm the Executive with arbitrary powers—are in conflict with the declared policy of the Congress and therefore must be repealed. That is possible only if the Congress acquires power in the Centre.

The All India Congress Committee has already declared the opposition of the Congress to the continuation of the present Central Legislature. The time is ripe to make this opposition effective with the demand *not* for a fresh election for the *existing* Central Legislature *not* for a nominally 'modified' Federation but for an Assembly elected by the people with supreme powers to enforce the popular demands.

REVOLUTION AND THE PROGRESS OF SCIENCE

By D. D. Kosambi

(*Professor of Mathematics, Fergusson College, Poona.*)

[We welcome this interesting contribution from the pen of a Mathematician. Prof. Kosambi is an authority on differential Geometry. He is in touch with mathematicians all over the world who are doing research work in the field in which he is interested. Prof. Kosambi establishes the thesis that revolutions which create a new order of things also create conditions for the healthy growth of the pure sciences. He shows how even pure mathematics has blossomed forth in post-revolutionary Russia and in Spain and how the decline of culture under fascism is visible in the field of mathematics as well.—*Editor.*]

It is believed by many that the purest forms of thought and their expression can develop as according to Bourgeois social theorists—only during periods of peace, quiet and plenty. This might seem reasonable, in view of the fact that whereas "purely utilitarian" sciences like chemistry might be developed by the order of the state and a crying emergency, the abstract sciences like mathematics can hardly be pursued by decree. As a matter of fact, this point of view is superficial: there are no purely utilitarian sciences, and discoveries in the most abstract of sciences can be traced to some perfectly material need of the time, or to some expression of the structure of existing society. But instead of developing this thesis, I shall consider one "pure" science, Mathematics, and its recent development in some countries where it might reasonably have been neglected in view of the objective circumstances.

Mathematics Amidst Spanish War

I have a letter *from Madrid,* dated May 12, 1938, to the effect that the

Spanish Mathematical Society regrets the fact that certain volumes of the Indian Mathematical Society's publications (received by them in exchange) are missing from their files, would we be good enough to supply the lack, and receive in exchange whatever issues of their journals might be missing from our files? (till the summer of 1938, their publications reached us with regularity, were sent as from Madrid and apparently printed in Madrid. No mention has been made in the letter cited, of the Civil War or the difficult times; one would be hard put to it to guess anything out of the way from the letter itself except for one thing: the sheet on which it has been typed was cut off just below the signature, presumably to save paper. "Business as usual" seems to be their motto; whenever possible, they want to do it better than usual. Since Gerbert (supposedly) received his training there from the arabs about a thousand years ago, Spain has not led Europe in mathematics. With the Republican movement, foreign mathematicians were occasionally invited to lecture in the university. Two years ago the first excellent *original* mathematical work appeared from a Spanish pen, the *Geometria Integral* of Santalo. And if the war does not end in the complete annihilation of the Loyalists, we might reasonably expect more to follow.

To match this, there comes a letter (Sept. 7, 1938) from Hong Kong, from the National Library of Peiping, which has temporarily established an office in British territory. They too want our publications but the war and the hard times are explicitly mentioned: "As many of our universities and scientific institutions have been deliberately destroyed by Japanese militarists, the need for scientific literature felt by Chinese scholars is most urgent". Yet, the Chinese look to the future, and frankly ask for help in a time of desperate need. The Chinese Mathematical Society had just been born when the war broke out, and I have been unable to get in touch with the editors of its publications, which have probably ceased by now.

Soviet's Place in Mathematical Research

The question naturally arises, how is it in a country where the revolution had not a "democratic" aspect as in Spain, nor a national one as in China, but where the Bourgeois element was crushed and uprooted by the iron will of Lenin and his successors? What happened to mathematics in Russia when Russia itself became the USSR, and some portions were actually separated by external force or by secession of national minorities? How does the Russian school of mathematicians compare with others? The consensus of opinion is that as a *school*, the Russian takes no less than the second place among national mathematical groups, the first being assigned to the United States of America. Judgement, of course, is on the basis of published works alone, and merit as well as the total output of research is considered. Here, it must be mentioned that by current Indian standards, only Cambridge (England) exists as a center of mathematical achievement, and the supreme achievement possible in mathematical fields is to have obtained a degree at Cambridge, perferably by passing an examination, which is considered superior to any research degree.

Part of the mathematics in Russia is inherited from Tsarist days, and the

tradition is really old. Catherine The Great, imported the best that Europe could offer, and from the year 1826, when Lobachevsky published his epoch-making discovery of non-Euclidean geometry, native genius might be said to have matured. Yet, the names are few. Chebyshev, Liapunov, and the startling Sonia Kovalevskaya. After all, the mathematician was indubitably a bourgeois, since revolutionary activity and research could hardly have been compatible. We do hear of one Linde, mathematician and philosopher, who "saved" the revolution in 1917 by calling out the Red regiments on the streets of Petrograd in April, but I am not aware of any mathematical discovery or theorem that goes by Linde's name. A few of the best found jobs in other couutries, and we notice Besicovich in England, in fact at Cambridge, Tamarkin Uspensky in America. They are among the leading lights on the subject in the countries of their choice. Others, like Alexandrov, and Krylov, have stuck to their posts, and developed into world authorities on their respective subjects. Alexandrov, in particular, specialises in the most difficult branch of the whole of mathematics, Topology.

The burden of bringing distinction to the new proletarian state rested on those who remained, and upon those who learned from them. There has been no doubt at all that those who remained have been encouraged to do their very best, and have had whatever comforts were available in the lean days of the civil wars and the first five year plan. Their productivity has greatly increased, which does not imply a dread of the G.P.U. for sabotage, but decent treatment, intelligent students—a most important stimulus for the research work of those whose profession is teaching—and a certain amount of enthusiasm for the progress of their country. But is this legacy from older days in danger of dying out under the dictatorship of the proletariat? Does the wiping out of the Bourgeoisie from which they were recruited imply that they will have no successors? Will the five year plans create engineers and statisticians to the exclusion of mathematicians as such?

U. S. S. R. Ranks Second in the World

The answer is very pleasant to any research worker. The outstanding work which places the "Russian" second in the international scale has been performed to a considerable extent by new and locally trained men, in distinction and contrast to that of the American school, which has gained recruits from all countries of Europe for hard cash, profiting in particular from the treatment of distinguished non-Aryan scientists in modern (since 1933) Germany. Imported scholars are a rarity in the U.S.S.R., and with the exception of a very small number, (the Polish Jew Walficz, for example at Tiflis), negligible in quality.

To name a few outstanding performances, we have the work of Vinogradov in the analytic theory of numbers. Till this giant of analytical technique entered the field, the work of Hardy, Littlewood, and their pupils in England, with that of the late Edward Landau and his students in Germany was considered the limit of modern mathematical achievement in the theory of numbers. As a result, several important problems were practically insoluble. Vinogradov's results are based on

his own refinements of the estimates for trigonometric sums, and in the last five years, this work has led him to the very top of his branch of the subject. Waring's problem can be regarded as essentially finished due to his efforts, the very best estimations in the distribution of prime numbers and of the zeros of Riemann's zeros function, derive from his work and that of his pupil Chudakov. And now, and his latest, we have what amounts to a settling of the famous Goldbach conjecture. The Waring and the Goldbach problems have occupied the best mathematical brains of the last two centuries, but the end was brought in sight only by Vinogradov.

To give only one other example, we note the fact that another half-century of mathematical endeavour was rounded off in 1934 by Kuz'min and Gelfond, who probed the very basis of the concept of real number, and settled a problem proposed a generation ago by one who is still regarded by many though long past the age of scientific discovery as the world's greatest living mathematician, Hilbert (German). Briefly, any rational number except zero and unity, raised to any algebraic irrational exponent is a transcendental number. It was known before, that the transcendental numbers could be regarded as much more numerous than the rational or the algebraic numbers but very little else was known about them.

Backward Nationals March Ahead

But this is not all. Among the mathematical papers written from the USSR, we notice names of nationalities which could hardly have been thought of as capable of scientific work under the Tsarist regime. Razmadze died, but his work on the calculus of variations will live, and even the posthumously published memoir (1934) on Delaunay's problem of conjugate points, would, by itself, be a creditable performance for any worker on the subject from its initiation to the present day. We notice other Georgian names: Kupradze, Gogoladze, and so on. There is already a mathematical institute in Tiflis; papers of a respectable quality appear there. The achievement would be comparable to that of producing research workers among the Pathans of our frontier province, and a really learned Society at Peshawar. The cultural level of the Georgians under the Tsar was certainly not higher than that of the Pathans to day. It might be argued that a Georgian being at the head of the USSR would give a tremendous impetus to all kinds of advance in Georgia, but the reasoning does not hold. Turkey has nothing to show in comparison, and there is nothing like an Irish school of mathematics, although president De Valera is admitted by his biographers to be very well acquainted with mathematics of the 'pure' and 'higher' variety.

To be quite fair, one would have to consider post-war mathematical advance in other countries as well. But the present ranking given to the Russian school, which certainly had no rating at all at the time of the revolution, speaks for itself. Neither that estimate of the whole "Russian" school of mathematicians nor the appraisal of the individual efforts cited is my own; I have been careful to quote from the opinions advanced by bourgeois European and Americans who were acknowledged authorities in the subjects themselves, and who, in the cases known to me personally, are violently anti-communist.

I have no reason to subject any political bias on their part in favour of the 'Russian' scientists.

Progress in Poland

In those countries which were carved out of Russia by 'national' revolutions only Poland can show any mathematics, and this is remarkably sound though limited in its scope. I have not mentioned the innumerable mathematical topics to which valuable additions have been made from post-revolutionary USSR; Statistics, (Khinchin, Kolmogorov) for instance, is one; and I mean the mathematical theory underlying statistics, not the mass of figures that make up the average man's notion of statistics. The Poles on the other hand specialise in Topology, and real variables. But the outstanding achievement is the discovery which lies outside both fields, by Lukasiewicz 1920–1931 of polyvalent non-Aristotelian logic: logic in which the excluded middle can appear, i.e. in which propositions need not be either true or false. This is a fundamental discovery of the first magnitude, but an individual effort. The productivity of the Polish school as such (add enthusiastic participation by national minorities) cannot be compared with the achievements across the border. The other countries need hardly be mentioned, though an occasional individual might exist (Nevanlinna in Finland.)

Mathematics Under Fascism

As compared to this, things are not so well with the Fascist powers. Germany has pushed out its non-aryans and therewith, a great deal, apparently the greater part, of its mathematical talent. The unfortunate repercussion of this exodus has been that the ablest have found good jobs in other countries, and so brought about at least a tinge of anti-semitism in the academic circles of the various lands of refuge which saw their own local products going jobless. Italy, for instance, which possesses the dean of living differential geometers in Levi-Civita, is developing Aryan tendencies, and if they become at all serious, this veteran might see the country to which he has brought so much scientific distinction during the last thirty years become a land of misery during his old age. The theory of relativity and so-apparently unrelated a subject as also dynamics are both based upon the absolute differential calculus, which he developed in conjuntion with his teacher Picci, and of which he is perhaps the greatest living exponent. The Fascist revolution found at least one famous mathematician among its enemies, Vito Volterra. But surprising as it may seem, he was allowed for years to continue unmolested, and to vote against the Duce's measures in the Italian senate, which he did with futile but monotonous regularity. To date, mathematics in Italy has not shown the heavy decline in standard that it has manifested in Germany, but with Aryanization, we might begin to see Ersatz-mathematics too.

In the third prominent member of the anti-comintern league, i.e. Japan, we do see mathematics still on the up grade, and Takagi, plus the Japanese school of differential geometers headed by Kawaguchi, are outstanding recent phenomena. I take it that in Bourgeois Imperialist forms of national development, the cultural elements lag behind economic advance or retreat, and that mathematics in Japan, which has certainly never reached the level there attained by sciences applicable directly to industry, is still ex-

panding. Inasmuch as I began this note with quotations from letters, let me finish with one from a Japanese mathematician of international repute. I had wished at the end of a technical letter, as a matter of courtesy, that the war might not affect his work adversely. He replied "...Here in Japan, there is no disturbance of public and economic peaces and our life as well as our labour is just so as the past. It is very sorry for the peace of the world, there are many false reports on the present Japan-Chinese affair which let peoples of the world misunderstand the righteous and peaceful object of Japan [Amazing! *Ed.*] and which have danger to put the whole world in a great war. These reports seem to be maked in accordance with the political and economic policy and according to stop the development of the oriental nations. But after the glorious victory of Japan, the truth will become clear."

I give the quotation for what it is worth, without other comment than that the author is a particularly competent scientist, and as alert a person in his own branch of mathematics as can be found anywhere today, to the best of my knowledge, no one in USSR (which is mathematicaly far ahead of Japan to day) can touch him in his own field. The letter is dated November, 4, 1937, and we have not discussed anything except mathematics in our subsequent correspondence.

Conclusion

The conclusion is irresistible that even the purest of pure science flourishes at its best when it develops in harmony and sympathy with its surroundings. A revolution which is attended with the greatest objective difficulties and is carried out in an unfavourable external environment can, even then, act as a stimulus to research. Our students are invariably told that any sort of political activity will interfere with their studies, and that culture can only flourish in an atmosphere of quiet. A considerable number of convocation addresses could be found holding up the sad example of intellectual destruction in Russia. The facts however, do not bear out these contentions. Our country has produced only one mathematician of the first rank after Bhaskaracharya eight hundred years ago. This was Ramanujan, and he was unable to pass even the first year of college. India gave him birth, starvation, tuberculosis, and a premature death. It is to the everlasting credit of the English mathematician Hardy that he recognized the merit of one who was considered half made by the Indians, had him brought in England trained him, and brought out his splendid ability. But there has been no one here who built upon the work of Ramanujan and by influence, Ramanujan is to be regarded as an English rather than as an Indian mathematician. Our tradition is still one of passing examinations here and then repeating them in England, not of doing anything new. It is Hardy's considered judgment that irreparable harm was done to Ramanujan by the misery and destitution of his formative years—from the age of seventeen to twenty five; the unchanged educational system, coupled with the philosophy of living as well as possible on the droppings of the Imperial administration will, in my own opinion, continue to do the same to any lad of genius.

182739

BOOK REVIEW

Joseph Freeman: An American Testament (London, Gollancz)

An honest personal chronicle is always welcome even if it does nothing else but let us know that there is another man as puzzled by the contemporary world as we are ourselves. Joseph Freeman's "An American Testament" is an account of an Oddysey through the world of war and post-war capitalism. As a boy he migrated with his family from a Czarist village in the Ukraine to the ideam world of capitalism, the United States of America, where there was Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and, most important of all Prosperity. The immigrant sought heaven and he found the America of Henry Ford and Coolidge, of Tom Mooney and the lynch laws.

The war and post-war years produced a crop of intellectuals who were discontented with American society; men who could find no satisfaction in its politics or in its religion.

A Quest for a faith

Freeman was one of the intelleetuals who could not endure post-war America. He studied Shelley; he migrated to Paris; he took an academic interests in socialism; he had himself psychoanalysed; he wrote for ultra-radical magazines. Finally, he exhibited a touch of real originality; he visited the Soviet Union. His story is essentially the story of a quest for a faith by which an intelligent man could order his life. He tried pretty well everything from puritanical religion to Freudianism, and he found nothing that interpreted a world of oppression, hypocrisy, and crude, greedy barbarism to him.

Fortunately for Freeman he had close boyhood connections with the working class movement. Always in the background of his narrative is the distant roll of battle: of pickets being beaten, of soldiers firing, of men being lynched by howling scum. He gradually became more and more conscious of the fact that, if he and his friends could not endure the aesthetic standards of capitalist New York, there were millions of men and women in mines, factories, mills and work camps who could not endure long hours, low wages, the Bedeaux system, and the despicable lies of the American capitalist press about prosperity for all and two cars in every garage. He was an infinitely long time in seeing the connection, but he eventually did see it.

His identification with the workers and peasants' movement transformed Freeman. When he deserted egocentric avenues of salvation, he changed from an intellectual into a full man. He became strong because he became part of a strong progressive and revolutionary class. He became free. Joining the workers' movement was no sacrifice; it was self-realisation.

A book all Should Read

Freeman's book is about America and Europe, but it has significance for India. Since the war millions of Indians have been seeking a faith which will enable them to live a peace with themselves and their fellow men in a society oppressed by imperialist reaction, of social and economic chance and cultural destruction. Old and new panaceas have been offered to the people but the rich grow richer and the poor poorer. The time has come when every Indian whether he works with his hands or with his brains has got to find for himself an understanding of the complex and changing world in which he lives. India like America has had its gods. The new India requires the rich and acute analysis of Marx and Lenin. Freeman has many a counterpart in India to-day.—A. B. C.

A Correction—Page 306

[*We understand that Bankim Mukerji is no longer the Vice President of the Bengal P. C. C. Ed.*]

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